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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/572,771	03/20/2007	Ramon Yepes Segovia	041206.035	9438
25461 7590 06/20/2008 SMITH, GAMBRELL & RUSSELL SUITE 3100, PROMENADE II 1230 PEACHTREE STREET, N.E. ATLANTA, GA 30309-3592				
EXAMINER				
SMITH, RICHARD A				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
2841				
MAIL DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
06/20/2008		PAPER		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/572,771

Applicant(s)

SEGOVIA ET AL

Examiner

R. Alexander Smith

Art Unit

2841

Period for Reply -- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 March 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1,5 and 9-12 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 13 and 14 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 2-4 and 6-8 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/S5108)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 20060321
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 13 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention.

Each of claims 13 and 14 is confusing to the point of being indefinite because claim 11 addresses "A grading mask" which is a physical entity or a physical construct which produces a tangible result, wherein each of claims 13 and 14 state "wherein the grading masks are in a digital form" which indicate that each of the masks is data and is not a physical entity or a physical construct.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

3. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

4. Claims 13 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. See MPEP § 2106.01.

As noted in the 112 rejection above the grading mask is a physical entity or a physical construct which produces a tangible result. Claims 13 and 14 reduce the mask(s) to data which is "nonfunctional descriptive material", regardless if stored on a computer readable medium or not, as discussed in MPEP § 2106.01.

Furthermore, please note the following pages and lines in the Applicant's specification which support the above rejections:

- (a) page 5 lines 19-21,
- (b) page 7 lines 11-13 and 26-28, and
- (c) page 15 lines 20-23.

Claim Objections

5. Claims 2-4 and 6-8 are objected to because of the following informalities:

Claim 2: "grading regions" in line 4 should start with --the-- in order to properly refer to its antecedent.

Claim 3:

(a) "grading regions" in line 4 should start with --of the-- in order to properly refer to its antecedent.

(b) "one or more characteristic points" in line 5 should start with --the-- in order to properly refer to its antecedent.

Claim 4: "grading regions" in line 11 should start with --of the-- in order to properly refer to its antecedent.

Claim 8: "a constraint" in line 2 should start with --the-- in order to properly refer to its antecedent introduced in claim 7.

Allowable Subject Matter

6. Claims 1, 5 and 9-12 are allowable.
7. Claims 2-4 and 6-8 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the claim objections set forth in this Office Action for claims 2-4 and 8 and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.
8. As allowable subject matter has been indicated, applicant's reply must either comply with all formal requirements or specifically traverse each requirement not complied with. See 37 CFR 1.111(b) and MPEP § 707.07(a).

Conclusion

9. The prior art made of record is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The prior art cited in PTO-892 disclose related methods and masks.
10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to R. Alexander Smith whose telephone number is 571-272-2251. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday from 9:30-6:00.
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Dean A. Reichard can be reached on 571-272-1984. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/R.A.Smith/

June 23, 2008

R. Alexander Smith
Primary Examiner Art Unit 2841